

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
MARCH 5, 2007

Jorge Nobo, chair, convened the Academic Affairs Committee at 3:33 pm in the Boswell Room of the Memorial Union. Members present were: Pat Munzer, David Pownell, Bill Roach, Steven Elisha, Patricia Renn-Scanlan, Shaun Schmidt, and Loran Smith. Guests were: Dr. Ron Wasserstein and Dr. Howard Faulkner, Chair of the English Department.

Dr. Nobo introduced the topic of today's meeting: What recommendations should the Committee make regarding the English University requirement? He asked Dr. Faulkner for his impressions of Dr. Royer's presentation. Dr. Faulkner said that EN 100 used to be taught regularly, the department had a placement exam, and taught it in blocks with EN 101 so students could shift from one to the other if necessary. The course fell into disuse but it is being taught in Fall, 2007. The English Dept. is going to try "guided self-placement." He is in the process of writing a letter to all prospective students, developing a brochure, and will be involving advisers in CUSP. All of which has to happen rapidly because the first Blueprint will be in April.

Smith said that too often evaluation of new programs is impressionistic or subjective and urged that Dr. Faulkner gather data regarding number of students, their academic backgrounds, performance in EN 100, etc. He felt that one of the most persuasive elements of Dr. Royer's presentation was that he had statistical evidence or data to support his points. Also, Smith urged that faculty advisors involved in Blueprint should be informed about guided self-placement.

Dr. Faulkner said that he had made a proposal to the Dean to increase the writing faculty and perhaps institutionalize an expository writing program that would include EN 100, EN 101, EN 200, and EN 300 and, if all goes well, to then go to a public grading (norming) system in the future.

Dr. Nobo called for a straw vote among committee members regarding their general support of guided self placement and some attempt at norming the evaluation of expository writing. The committee strongly supported both concepts in the informal poll.

MOTIONS:

1. To formalize the straw poll and the actions of the English Department to this point, Smith moved that Dr. Faulkner be requested to provide a report to the Academic Affairs Committee at its first meeting in the Fall on the progress, success, and areas of needed improvement of the Guided Self-Placement Program during its initial implementation.
MOTION WAS APPROVED.

2. Smith then moved that the Academic Affairs Committee is supportive of the idea of norming the evaluation of expository writing. MOTION WAS APPROVED.

Dr. Nobo suggested that we might also wish to discuss some requirement of Writing Intensive Courses as part of General Education. Smith said he would like to see some specific proposal rather than just a vague concept. Dr. Wasserstein said that Writing Intensive courses should probably be considered as part of the whole General Education program rather than discussed separately.

Next Meeting Scheduled for April 2, 2007. The PE requirement will be the agenda item.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:33 pm